



# Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening for Neighbourhood Plans

## Warmington

## Neighbourhood Development Plan

**15 November 2018**

**European Union – “Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora” (“European Habitats Directive”, Article 6(3))**

### Introduction to Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Article 6(3) of the [European Habitats Directive](#) (1992) requires that any plan (or project), which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site [also known as a “Natura 2000” site], but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to an ‘appropriate assessment’ of its implications for the European site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. The plan-making body shall agree to the plan only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned, unless in exceptional circumstances the provisions of Article 6(4) are met.

The Habitats Directive was initially incorporated into national law through [The Conservation \(Natural Habitats, &c.\) Regulations 1994](#) (SI 1994 No 2716). These Regulations were amended in 2007 to include a requirement for the relevant body (i.e. East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) and/ or the relevant Town Council(s), Parish Council(s) or Neighbourhood Forums) to undertake a discrete ‘appropriate assessment’ or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). The 2004/ 2007 Regulations were subsequently consolidated into [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010](#) (SI 2010 No 490), as amended.

### Guidance regarding HRA

The [North Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit](#) (December 2012) explains that: *“The [Neighbourhood] Plan or [Neighbourhood Development] Order may also need to be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment if there might be an impact on the Nene Valley*

*Special Protection Area (SPA)*” (paragraph 3.16). It is therefore critical to establish at an early stage in the process whether or not their emerging Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO will require Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

A range of guidance has been produced, regarding the methodologies and processes for undertaking HRA (also known as ‘appropriate assessment’). Key reference documents include:

- [Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans – Guidance for Plan-Making Bodies in Scotland](#) – Version 2.0 (David Tyldesley and Associates, August 2012)
- [Habitats Directive – Guidance on competent authority coordination under the Habitats Regulations](#) (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, July 2012)
- [Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment](#) (Department for Communities and Local Government, August 2006)
- [Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6\(3\) and \(4\) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC](#) (European Commission, November 2001)

### **HRA Screening stages**

A review of the various guidance documents has found that David Tyldesley and Associates’ (DTA) Scottish guidance provides the most up to date and systematic guidance currently available for undertaking HRA Screening. Reference to the DTA and other guidance has identified the following stages:

- Preliminary HRA stages:
  - Stage 1: Deciding whether a Neighbourhood Plan should be subject to HRA;
  - Stage 2: Identifying the European sites that should be considered;
  - Stage 3: Gathering information about the European sites;
  - Stage 4: Initial discussions on the method and scope of the appraisal.
- HRA Screening – testing whether a Neighbourhood Plan is ‘likely to have a significant effect’ on a European (“Natura 2000”) site (DTA Stage 5):
  - Step 1: Neighbourhood Plan vision and outcomes;
  - Step 2: Policies, proposals and projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the Neighbourhood Plan;
  - Step 3: Typologies of policies in Neighbourhood Plans – identifying if any are likely to have significant effects on any European site.
- Where any possible ‘likely significant effects’ of a Neighbourhood Plan are identified through the initial HRA Screening exercise, additional stages in the process are:
  - Applying mitigation measures at screening stage to avoid likely significant effects (DTA Stage 6);
  - Rescreening the Neighbourhood Plan and deciding upon on the need for appropriate assessment (i.e. full HRA).

The remainder of this toolkit will consider each of these HRA Screening stages, in turn.

**Please note that only the parts of this form which are highlighted in red will need to be completed.**

### Preliminary HRA stages (stages 1-3)

Stage 1: Deciding whether a Neighbourhood Plan should be subject to HRA	Y/N	Commentary
Is the whole of the plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site for nature conservation purposes?	N	<i>A Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory development plan document. By definition, it will have a broader scope than the management of a European "Natura 2000" site. It should be noted that the Habitats Directive does not specify the scope of either 'plan' or 'project' by reference to particular categories of either. Instead, the <b>key</b> limiting factor is whether or not they are likely to have a significant effect on a site.</i>
Is the plan a development plan document?	Y	<i>The Plan-making body (i.e. ENC and/ or the relevant Town Council(s), Parish Council(s) or Neighbourhood Forums) should proceed to identify the European sites that may potentially be affected, gather the information about them and 'screen' the plan for likelihood of significant effects on a European site.</i>
Stage 2: Identifying the European sites that should be considered	Y/N	Commentary
<p>Which European (Natura 2000) sites should be considered?</p> <p>[European sites, subject to the Habitats Directive, will have one or more of the following designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ramsar site</li> <li>● Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</li> <li>● Special Protection Area (SPA)]</li> </ul>	N/a	<p><i>The recent HRA screening opinion for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2031 (Local Plan Part 1) and emerging HRA for the Local Plan Part 2 have already assessed the potential impacts of the Local Plan on the following designated Natura 2000 sites:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar</li> <li>● Orton Pit SAC</li> <li>● Nene Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar</li> <li>● Rutland Water SPA and Ramsar</li> <li>● The Wash SPA and Ramsar</li> <li>● The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC</li> </ul>

		<i>The JCS Screening Reports for this strategic “higher level” Plan, concluded that this Plan (in combination, the Local Plan) could have a significant impact <b>solely</b> upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar (Natura 2000) site.</i>
<b>Stage 3: Gathering information about the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<p><b>Is there data or information already available/ published regarding the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar site?</b></p> <p><b>[The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar site extends for approximately 35km along the alluvial deposits of the River Nene floodplain from Clifford Hill (Billing) on the southern outskirts of Northampton, downstream to Thorpe Waterville, north of Thrapston]</b></p>	<b>Y</b>	<p><i>The following documents provide detailed direction as to the characteristics (Habitats Directive qualifying species and vulnerabilities) of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar site:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment</a> (January 2015)</li> <li>• <a href="#">North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment Addendum</a> (June 2015)</li> </ul>
	<b>Y</b>	<i>The 1<sup>st</sup> draft (Regulation 14) version of the <b>Warmington</b> Neighbourhood Development Plan was subject to HRA screening <b>15 Nov 2018</b>. At the time, Natural England was satisfied that: “From the evidence set out in your screening opinion it would seem unlikely that Likely Significant Effects (LSE) would result from the Neighbourhood Plan alone.”</i>
		<i>Policy 4 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2031, adopted July 2016, requires the preparation of a Mitigation Strategy as an <a href="#">Addendum to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document</a> (SPD). This SPD Addendum and associated Mitigation Strategy, adopted by East Northamptonshire Council on 21 November 2016, includes a requirement for <b>all</b> residential development within a 3km buffer zone of the SPA/ Ramsar site to contribute towards delivering the Mitigation Strategy.</i>

		<i>The SPD Addendum proposes a flat rate (per-dwelling) financial contribution, to fund the HRA mitigation measures identified through the Mitigation Strategy.</i>
<b>Stage 4: Initial discussions on the method and scope of the appraisal</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Have preliminary discussions have taken place with relevant bodies regarding the HRA for the Neighbourhood Plan?</b>	<b>Y</b>	<i>ENC has already consulted Natural England, the relevant statutory consultation body; during the earlier Neighbourhood Area consultation stages (Regulations 6 and 14, Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012). All relevant feedback (relating to the Regulation 16 consultation) is attached at appendices 1-3 to this screening opinion.</i>

### **Preliminary HRA Screening stages – overview**

The Local Plan Part 1 (JCS), which sets the strategic policy framework for the Neighbourhood Plan, has already been subject to HRA. This has identified specific measures (i.e. the implementation of a Mitigation Strategy) to ensure that the JCS fulfils the requirements of the Habitat Regulations.

The 2015 JCS HRA and 2012 Four Towns Plan Screening Assessment have both already concluded that the new Local Plan Part 1 (JCS) will not have any significant impacts upon any Natura 2000 sites, with the exception of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar site. These Assessments have already been endorsed by Natural England, the relevant statutory consultation body.

Natural England has already agreed specific Local Plan measures (JCS Policy 4), by which any potential significant impacts of residential development upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site may be overcome; within a defined 3km buffer zone. By definition the draft Neighbourhood Plan is smaller and more localised, so the remainder of this HRA Screening Assessment will exclusively consider the possible significant impacts of emerging Plan policies upon this Natura 2000 site. Specifically, it is necessary for the Warmington Neighbourhood Development Plan to recognise the requirements of JCS Policy 4 with regard to the SPA/ Ramsar site.

The remainder of this screening process should consider whether a further bespoke “appropriate assessment” would need to be undertaken to fulfil the requirements of the Habitat Regulations; over and above that already prepared for the North Northamptonshire JCS (Local Plan Part 1: strategic policies).



## HRA Screening – testing whether a Neighbourhood Plan is ‘likely to have a significant effect’ on a European (“Natura 2000”) site [the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar site] (stage 5)

The process of HRA Screening is necessary to determine whether there are any potentially **significant** impacts upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits (UNVGP) SPA/ Ramsar site arising from individual policies or proposals in the **Warmington Neighbourhood Development Plan**.

The DTA guidance explains the role of HRA, as a whole. The fundamental test of significance is where a plan or project **could** undermine the conservation objectives of the UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site. Overall, this Neighbourhood Plan Screening exercise should:

- a) Identify all aspects of the plan which would have no effect on a European site, so that that they can be eliminated from further consideration in respect of this and other plans;
- b) Identify all aspects of the plan which would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (i.e. would have some effect, but minor residual), either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan or other plans or projects, which therefore do not require full ‘appropriate assessment’; and
- c) Identify those aspects of the plan where it is not possible to rule out the risk of significant effects on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This provides a clear scope for the parts of the plan that will require appropriate assessment.

The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will include some, or all, of the following policy typologies:

- Overarching Neighbourhood Plan vision and outcomes
- Development management policies, e.g. detailed design policies and criteria
- Protection policies, e.g. zonal land designations
- Development land allocations
- Transport and connectivity policies
- Green infrastructure and tourism policies

Policy typology	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Commentary
<b>Step 1: Overarching Neighbourhood Plan vision and outcomes</b>	✓	X	✓	The DTA guidance explains that parts of plans which are merely general policy statements, or which only show the general political will or intention of a public body, will not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

Vision - core vision statements in the plan	X	X	✓	It may be appropriate, for completeness, to consider whether the overall Neighbourhood Plan vision might have any conceivable potential negative implications for the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site
The diverse open spaces that are essential to the character of the village will be preserved and maintained.	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
Organic growth through small developments will be welcomed where they meet an evidenced local need and are of a design that preserves and enhances the existing natural and built environment in a sustainable manner.	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
Economic development that makes use of existing underused commercial sites within the parish will be encouraged where it improves the surrounding environment and offers sustainable local employment.	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
Improvements to local infrastructure and community facilities will be encouraged and supported where they improve sustainability, improve renewable energy production and use, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
By 2031 facilities will be more closely matched to	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.

the community needs, residents will be able to walk, cycle and drive safely on properly maintained paths, tracks and roads both locally and to all the neighbouring villages and towns and visitors will be attracted to Destination Warmington.				
Objectives listed in the plan	✓	X	X	It may be appropriate, for completeness, to consider whether the overall Neighbourhood Plan specific outcomes might have any conceivable potential negative implications for the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site
To ensure that community views are considered at the earliest opportunity in the planning process by promoting open dialogue with all interested parties.	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
To protect the historic buildings and settings that provide much of the character of the village - by Conservation Area designation and Design Code	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
To protect the green spaces within the village and the open spaces surrounding the village together with the vistas across the open landscape that give the parish its attractive character - by designation within the plan	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
To maintain the existing settlement boundary and	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.

define criteria that any proposed new development outside the settlement boundary must meet to be approved.				
To update the Village Design Statement (VDS)	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
To form a Design Code from the VDS guidelines.	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
To maintain a clear margin between the bypass and the residential area of the village.	✓	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
To ensure that any development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Is sensitive to, and enhances, the environment and wildlife.</li> <li>■ is sensitive to, and in harmony with, the local landscape.</li> <li>■ Is resilient to climate change.</li> <li>■ Minimises energy use and maximises appropriate renewable energy production.</li> <li>■ Adheres to and builds on design principles with the Design Code</li> <li>■ Prioritises sustainable transport modes whilst providing adequate off street parking</li> <li>■ Mitigates loss of community amenity by making timely and effective contributions to the community through appropriate associated works or financial conditions in accordance with community priorities</li> </ul>	✓	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.

<p>To promote economic use of facilities west of A605</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ By encouraging sustainable economic activity using redundant buildings and sites</li> <li>■ By encouraging development of small scale facilities that provide for visitors to the area</li> </ul>	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
<p>To promote renewable energy production and use and reduce use of fossil fuels such that all new developments are self sustaining with a zero carbon balance by 2030 by such means as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Public electric car points</li> <li>■ Community energy schemes</li> <li>■ Application of appropriate building standards and targets</li> <li>■ Including criteria requiring zero carbon homes for any development outside the settlement boundary</li> </ul>	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.
<p>Aspirational objectives which policies may also support but which are specific outcomes from the community surveys and consultations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To encourage a Destination Warmington theme so that before 2031 the parish of Warmington will be recognised as an attractive place to visit and</li> </ul>	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA/ Ramsar site.

<p>local businesses and community assets will benefit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To agree a sustainable program for the maintenance of the green spaces, wide verges, stone walls and paths within the village and into the surrounding countryside</li> <li>■ To make Taylors Green a Quiet Lane</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Step 2: Policies, proposals and projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the Neighbourhood Plan</b></p>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>✓</b>	<p>The introductory sections of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan will, inevitably, cross refer to other relevant plans, policies and programmes. The DTA guidance explains that a useful ‘test’ as to whether a project should be screened out at this stage is to consider whether the plan, project or programme would be likely to be implemented, irrespective of the Neighbourhood Plan?” If the answer is “yes”, it will normally be appropriate to screen the project out at this stage.</p>
<p>Adopted North Northamptonshire JCS policies</p>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>✓</b>	<p>Separately screened through JCS Habitat Regulations Assessment process</p>
<p>Saved policies from the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP) 2011</p>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>✓</b>	<p>Do not affect the SPA / Ramsar site. The RNOTP as adopted (2011) predates the SPA designation and these policies therefore form the current baseline policy framework. It is anticipated that these saved policies will be assessed to see whether policies from the Neighbourhood Plan would provide appropriate replacements.</p>

<b>Step 3:</b>				
<b>Development Management policies</b>				
Detailed design policies and criteria etc.	X	X	✓	Most detailed design policies set out locally significant design criteria. These small scale, development management policies are often most relevant for householder or other minor applications/ schemes. The detailed, localised nature of such policies enables these to be screened out, as not having any significant impact upon the UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site.
<b>Protection policies</b>	X	X	✓	Protection policies seek to maintain the 'status quo'. As such, by definition, any decision to retain existing land use types or operations at a particular location would not lead to any changes to 'baseline' circumstances. Therefore, these policies could not be expected to have a significant impact upon the UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site, so may be screened out at this stage.
Draft Policy W6: Local Green Spaces Local Green Spaces are designated in accordance with paragraphs 99-101 of the NPPF and are listed at Appendix 2. Proposals for development in a Local Green Space will be resisted unless there are very special circumstances to justify it.	X	X	✓	The Neighbourhood Area entirely lies beyond the 3km and 4km buffer zones for the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site, so the Neighbourhood Plan policies as a whole are not considered to affect the SPA / Ramsar site. This policy seeks to protect existing green spaces.
Draft Policy W7: Important Local Open Spaces	X	X	✓	Do not affect the SPA / Ramsar site. This policy seeks to protect existing

<p>Important Local Open Spaces are designated in accordance NNJCS Policy 7 and paragraphs 3.88 and 3.89 and are listed at Appendix 2.</p> <p>Proposals for development in Important Local Open Spaces will be resisted unless they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• justify the need for any loss</li> <li>• mitigate any loss by replacement or substantial enhancement of other spaces or facilities by schemes costed within the proposal, or by developer contributions</li> </ul>				open spaces.
<p><b>Development land allocations</b></p>	?	?	?	<p>Natural England has recently advised that: <i>“There may be a need for consideration of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site (under the Habitats Regulations) if any of the Neighbourhood Plans put forward new development in sensitive locations. We would expect to advise on this formally at the appropriate consultation stage but...understand that communities may appreciate an early steer before investing time developing options that may prove challenging with the SPA”</i> (June 2014).</p>
<p>Smaller scale/ minor employment and housing land allocations (&lt;100 dwellings or &lt;1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace)</p>	X	X	✓ <sup>1</sup>	<p>Natural England has advised that for sites within 3km of the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site, it cannot be regarded as possible to rule out the risk of significant effects. Therefore, in</p>

<sup>1</sup> Impact may be regarded as neutral, unless a site is within 200m radius of the SPA/ Ramsar site

				<p>these circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required.</p> <p>In the case of residential development, mechanisms for development contributions to mitigate the impact of increased visitor numbers from additional development are set out in JCS Policy 4 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy H.</p>
Major employment land allocations (>1000m <sup>2</sup> floorspace)	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	<p>Natural England has advised that for sites within 500m (0.5km) of the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site, it cannot be regarded as possible to rule out the risk of significant effects. Therefore, in these circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required.</p>
Larger scale housing land allocations (100 dwellings or more)	<b>?</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>X</b> <sup>3</sup>	<p>Natural England has advised that for major development sites within 4km (4000m) of the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site, it cannot be possible to rule out the risk of significant effects. Natural England has also identified potential significant adverse impacts from <b>all</b> residential development within 3km of the SPA/ Ramsar site.</p> <p>Therefore, in these circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required. Reference ought to be made to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), to identify those potential sites within the SPA/ Ramsar site <b>4km</b> buffer zone.</p>
[Housing policies] Draft Policy W1: Community Engagement in Planning	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	✓	<p>Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site - the boundary of Warmington parish is more than 4km away from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits</p>

<sup>2</sup> Impact may be regarded as neutral, unless a site is within 500m radius of the SPA/ Ramsar site

<sup>3</sup> Impact cannot be regarded as neutral, unless a site is more than 3km (3000m) radius away from the SPA/ Ramsar site

<p>Landowners and developers considering making proposals for development within the parish are encouraged to contact the Parish Council (PC) at the earliest opportunity to improve community engagement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The PC will review all proposals without prejudice to its statutory role</li> <li>2. The PC will form a Local Liaison Group for strategic or significant developments and for developments of more than a single unit.</li> <li>3. The Local Planning Authority should notify applicants for Pre-Application advice that they could demonstrate community engagement by contacting the PC.</li> <li>4. The PC will facilitate access to local advice, where possible, to help applicants make effective plans that enhance and protect the local character and environment in accordance with this plan including appendices.</li> <li>5. Applicants who demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that</li> </ol>				<p>SSSI. There are no sites allocated for development in the plan.</p>
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cannot.				
<p>Draft Policy W2: Settlement Boundary in Warmington</p> <p>The existing settlement boundary will be retained and all development outside the boundary will be resisted with the exception of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Exception sites for up to 10 dwellings which must be evidenced by local need and remain as affordable housing for people with a local connection in perpetuity</li> <li>• Additional housing requirements imposed through overarching national or local planning authority policy changes, which are evidenced by local need and for an appropriate mix of housing</li> </ul> <p>Proposed sites must meet the criteria in Policy W3</p>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>✓</b>	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site - the boundary of Warmington parish is more than 4km away from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI.
<p>Draft Policy W3: Criteria for the selection of housing sites allowed by Policy W2 outside the settlement boundary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Small scale sites will be preferred</li> <li>2. Brownfield sites will be preferred</li> <li>3. The site should be immediately adjacent to the existing built environment of the settlement and should not create an area to be</li> </ol>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>✓</b>	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site - the boundary of Warmington parish is more than 4km away from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI.

<p>infilled</p> <p>4. The site should not significantly increase traffic through the village</p> <p>5. The site should not result in a loss of Local Green Space</p> <p>6. The site should not result in a loss of Important Open Space</p> <p>7. The site should not reduce biodiversity</p> <p>8. The location and scale should respect the existing natural and historic features including their settings</p> <p>9. The site should not be at risk from flooding or compromise flood alleviation</p> <p>10. Any additional infrastructure needed to support the site should be identified</p> <p>a. for large sites this might include relocation of the Primary School</p> <p>b. for all sites Fibre to the Premises should be available</p> <p>c. large sites should consider on site renewable energy facilities</p> <p>11. The site should aim to use existing access to the A605</p> <p>12. The location and scale should leave a significant open space between housing and the A605</p> <p>13. If the site area includes an existing community facility a new location for an</p>				
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<p>improved replacement should be identified</p> <p>14. Direct traffic free pedestrian/cycle links to existing links and village facilities should be identified</p> <p>15. The location and proposed use should not reduce the residential amenity of existing dwellings</p> <p>16. Sites should use existing road infrastructure</p> <p>17. Sites must not materially impact any Conservation Area</p>				
<p>Draft Policy W4: Design Code for Warmington</p> <p>All new development should enhance the character of the village and respect the existing village. Proposals for development will only be supported if they comply with the Design Code at Appendix 2 to this plan.</p>	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site. This policy considers the built design only.
<p>Draft Policy W5: Backland or Tandem Development</p> <p>The sub-division of existing housing plots to provide either infill development along a frontage or rear garden development will be supported where all the following criteria are met:</p> <p>1. The existing and proposed building plots are of a sufficient</p>	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site. This policy seeks to preserve a good proportion of green space for small developments on existing garden space.

<p>dimension;                  2. The proposed layout and spacing of dwellings reflects the prevailing pattern of housing development in the area and does not result in any tandem form of layout or loss of privacy to surrounding residential amenity land;                  3. Any access road into the proposed development does not create an unacceptable disruption to the character and appearance of the existing road frontage;                  4. Any access road or parking area is sufficiently separated or screened from existing residential development so as not to adversely affect these properties through noise or visual intrusion;                  5. The development does not prejudice the opportunity to develop adjoining land with similar potential                  6. The development does not impact on any local green or important open space                  7. The proposal complies with the Design Code (Policy W3)</p>				
<p>[Employment and Commercial policies]                  Draft Policy W12 - Support for business Development proposals to re-use, convert, upgrade</p>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>✓</b></p>	<p>Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site - the boundary of Warmington parish is more than 4km away from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI.</p>

<p>or extend existing employment sites will be supported unless the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of surrounding properties, landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage.</p> <p>Conversion of existing buildings to provide premises for new small scale business development providing local employment opportunities will be supported providing that they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. are of a scale appropriate to the immediate surroundings</li> <li>2. do not have a detrimental impact on surrounding residential amenity</li> <li>3. do not lead to the loss of open space or green infrastructure</li> <li>4. do not have an unacceptable impact on traffic</li> <li>5. include adequate car parking for staff and public</li> <li>6. include cycle shelter and ensure linkages to traffic free cycle/walking routes.</li> </ol>				
<p>Draft Policy W13 - Sustainable Recreational and Tourism activities Development proposals that provide facilities for recreation and tourist activities will be supported throughout the parish provided that:</p>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>✓</b></p>	<p>Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site - the boundary of Warmington parish is more than 4km away from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI.</p>

<p>1. the siting, scale and design respects the character of the surrounding area, including any historic and natural assets;</p> <p>2. sustainable transport is supported and encouraged as a priority</p> <p>3. the local transport network is capable of accommodating the additional traffic movements;</p> <p>4. adequate parking for staff and public is provided on the site</p>				
<b>Transport/ connectivity policies</b>	?	?	?	Natural England has advised that for new transport connections or linkages within 500m (0.5km) of the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site, it cannot be regarded as possible to rule out the risk of significant effects. Therefore, in these circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required.
Potential routes/ proposals to open up access to Nene Valley; e.g. additional links to East Northamptonshire Greenway	?	?	X	Neighbourhood Plans may consider specific proposals for new pedestrian and cycle links to the Nene Valley (including SPA/ Ramsar site). If specific proposals which could increase access (and therefore possible disturbance) to the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site are put forward through a Neighbourhood Plan; in such circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required.
Other transport/ connectivity policies or proposals	X	X	✓	Other potential accessibility proposals are likely to be strategic in nature. As such, these are extremely unlikely that specific transport proposals would be put

				forward through a Neighbourhood Plan.
Draft Policy W10 - Traffic Management and Transport Improvements Proposals to improve road safety and traffic management throughout the Parish will be fully supported. Development proposals that increase traffic flows onto the A605 must mitigate these through developer contributions, CIL or works, towards: 1. Highway improvement schemes to promote the safety of pedestrians and cycle users 2. Highway improvements to improve the safety at road junctions on the A605 in conjunction with adjacent parishes	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site, traffic flows are not under control of this plan, this policy just reacts to them with local mitigation
Draft Policy W11 - Sustainable Transport Development proposals must include measures to improve sustainable transport by 1. Including footpaths and cycleways enabling residents of all ages and abilities to walk, cycle or utilise mobility vehicles safely from homes to the village centre 2. Contribute to establishing or enhancing pedestrian and cycle routes in and	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site, the Northamptonshire Greenway links that may pass through or close to the SPA/Ramsar site are already established in other plans, this plan seeks a local implementation of these existing plans using existing paths and routes.

<p>through the villages and beyond including appropriate signage.</p> <p>3. Providing links to wildlife corridors and providing landscaping and planting along routes to support local biodiversity objectives such as provision of new areas of woodland, new hedgerows, grassland and wetland habitats</p> <p>Proposals that would result in a loss of an existing path, right of way or associated facility must:</p> <p>1. Replace this with an appropriate alternative and improved facility OR</p> <p>2. Mitigate the loss through developer contributions, CIL or works, towards establishing or enhancing pedestrian and cycle routes in and through the villages and beyond including appropriate signage.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>3. Gain agreement from the community through the PC for these measures and complete them prior to any development works taking place.</p>				
<b>Green infrastructure/ tourism policies</b>	✓	?	X	

Potential green infrastructure connections to Nene Valley	✓	?	X	Neighbourhood Plans may consider specific proposals for new green infrastructure connections to the Nene Valley (including SPA/ Ramsar site). If specific proposals which could increase access (and therefore possible disturbance) to the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site are put forward through a Neighbourhood Plan; in such circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required.
Proposals for tourist hubs or facilities	?	?	X	Neighbourhood Plans may put forward specific proposals to develop tourist or visitor facilities. Natural England has advised that where these are proposed within 200m of the UNVGP SPA/ Ramsar site, it cannot be regarded as possible to rule out the risk of significant effects. Therefore, in these circumstances a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' may be required.
Draft Policy W13 - Sustainable Recreational and Tourism activities Development proposals that provide facilities for recreation and tourist activities will be supported throughout the parish provided that: 1. the siting, scale and design respects the character of the surrounding area, including any historic and natural assets; 2. sustainable transport is supported and encouraged as a priority 3. the local transport network is capable of accommodating the	X	X	✓	Does not affect the SPA / Ramsar site - the boundary of Warmington parish is more than 4km away from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI.

additional traffic movements; 4. adequate parking for staff and public is provided on the site				
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**In the event that any potential negative effects are identified at Stage 5 in respect of specific relevant policies, the screening opinion should be sent to Natural England for an initial view, to confirm that these really are “likely significant effects”. This preliminary consultation should take place in advance of the formal consultation stage.**

## Applying mitigation measures at screening stage to avoid likely significant effects (stage 6)

- **All** residential development within the 3km SPA/ Ramsar site buffer; large major housing developments (>100 dwellings) within the 4km SPA/ Ramsar site buffer.
- Smaller scale/ minor employment land allocations (<1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace) within **200m radius** of the SPA / Ramsar site;
- Major employment land allocations (>1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace) within **500m (0.5km) radius** of the SPA / Ramsar site;
- Potential routes/ proposals to open up access to Nene Valley; e.g. additional links to East Northamptonshire Greenway;
- Potential green infrastructure connections to Nene Valley;
- Proposals for tourist hubs or facilities) within **200m radius** of the SPA / Ramsar site.

<p><b>If a potentially significant negative impact of an emerging Neighbourhood Plan policy or proposal upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar sites has been identified, the questions below should be considered</b></p>		
<p><b>Policy reference(s) and/ or proposal (s):</b> <i>No policies could be regarded as having potential negative impacts upon the UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site.</i></p>		
Is the policy or proposal essential to deliver the overall vision and objectives of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan?	n/a	
If yes, could the policy or proposal be deleted, amended, or its scale reduced; so as to ensure that any potential harm is eliminated or minimised to the extent that it could not lead to any significant impact upon the SPA/ Ramsar site?	n/a	
<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p><i>JCS Policy 4, the Addendum to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document and Policy H provide the relevant mechanisms for securing contributions from new residential developments within the 3km buffer zone towards specific UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site mitigation measures set out in the Mitigation Strategy.</i></p>		
Could the policy or proposal be redrafted or relocated respectively, to ensure that it is sufficiently well situated, so as to remove any	n/a	

potential significant impacts?		
<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p><i>JCS Policy 4, the Addendum to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document and Policy H already provide the relevant mechanisms for securing contributions from new residential developments within the 3km buffer zone towards specific UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site mitigation measures set out in the Mitigation Strategy.</i></p>		
Could the policy or proposal be developed in association with other policies or proposals being put forward through the Local Plan (i.e. JCS and/ or Local Plan Part 2)?	n/a	
<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p><i>No amendments to policies have been proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan examination process, to ensure that this is consistent with the JCS and therefore the requirements of the Habitat Regulations.</i></p>		
Could a “buffer” or exclusion zone be appropriate, to overcome any concerns regarding the potential impacts of a Neighbourhood Plan policy or proposal upon the SPA/ Ramsar site?	n/a	
<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p><i>JCS Policy 4, the Addendum to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document and Policy H already provide the relevant mechanisms for securing contributions from new residential developments within the 3km buffer zone towards specific UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site mitigation measures set out in the Mitigation Strategy.</i></p>		
<p><b>Conclusions regarding proposed mitigation measures</b></p> <p><i>The Local Plan (JCS) already provides the mechanism by which potential adverse impacts upon the UNVGP SPA / Ramsar site may be addressed. No modifications to policies have been proposed during the Neighbourhood Plan examination process to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with the JCS; with reference to the Habitat Regulations.</i></p>		

## **Conclusions: Rescreening the Neighbourhood Plan and deciding upon on the need for appropriate assessment (i.e. full HRA)**

**Screening has revealed that the following emerging Neighbourhood Plan policies and proposals, which are deemed essential and integral to the overall Plan vision and**

outcomes, could have a potentially significant impact upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA / Ramsar site:

Nil

In order to overcome any potentially significant negative impact, the following amendments to policies or proposals within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan are proposed:

n/a

A view has been sought from Natural England, as to whether it will be necessary for the emerging Warmington Neighbourhood Development Plan to be accompanied by a full 'appropriate assessment' (HRA).

**In accordance with the 2004 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, 28 days have been allowed for Natural England and other relevant consultees to respond to this screening report. Comments will need to be received by 4:30pm on XX.**

On this basis, this HRA Screening has revealed that it **will not** be necessary to undertake a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.

Please note that if a full HRA 'appropriate assessment' is deemed necessary, then it will be necessary for a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to also be undertaken to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.

**[APPENDICES/ ATTACHMENTS] NIL**